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SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON ANC DEPUTY PRESIDENT
JACOB ZUMA

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¶1. (U) ANC Deputy President Jacob Zuma, aged 65, is about to become a father again, according to the South African magazine "YOU." (NOTE: YOU is published in Afrikaans and English, is probably most comparable to People Magazine in the US, and has a readership of 2.1 million. END NOTE.) Though Zuma has always refused to publicly admit how many wives or children he has, the magazine reports that Zuma's 18th child is on the way. The mother to be is 35-year old Thobeka Stacy Mabhija, a former cell phone company administrator from Durban who has reportedly been Zuma's girlfriend for the past ten years. (COMMENT: While we cannot confirm the report, a close Embassy contact told PolOffs on 11 July that she believes it is true. END COMMENT)

¶2. (U) The magazine article links Zuma to at least 8 other women:

-- Sizakele Gertrude Khumalo: They met in 1959 and she still lives in Nkandla, Zuma's hometown in Kwa-Zulu Natal. She was pregnant once but miscarried. They have no children and are still married.

-- Kate Mantsho: She was a stewardess for a Mozambican airline and committed suicide in 2000 by taking an overdose of malaria and sleeping pills. Her suicide note allegedly said she experienced "24 years in a bitter and most painful" marriage. They had five children: Saady, twins Duduzile and Duduzane, Phumzile, and Vusi.

-- Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma (current Minister of Foreign Affairs): They married in 1982 and divorced in 1998. Their four children are Thutu, Gugu, Thuli, and Msholozi.

-- Minah Shongwe: Minah is the daughter of Judge Jeremiah Shongwe, who recused himself from Zuma's rape trial last year on the basis that he was the uncle of Zuma and Minah's son, Edward. Edward was arrested in 2001 after being accused of raping a 17-year old fellow student at the University of Zululand. He was released on bail and never prosecuted after the alleged victim withdrew the charge.

-- Unknown woman from Johannesburg with whom he has three children, Bridget and a twin son and daughter. The children have lived with Zuma's current girlfriend Mabhija.

-- An unknown woman in Richards Bay with whom he has a daughter Jabulile.

-- A woman known as MaNtuli, in Nkandla, with whom he

has a daughter.

¶3. (SBU) For those who already consider themselves pro-Zuma, the pending birth will have little to no impact on their support. After all, children are a sign of prosperity and wealth and a blessing from God and ancestors in Zulu culture.

However, for those who do not like Zuma, the latest news will confirm his reputation (rightly or wrongly) as a man with little control and poor judgment, especially since his ability to support his children has been cited as one of the possible reasons he accepted money from his convicted friend and financial advisor Schabir Shaik.

Bost